Claims:

Sub A1

1. A device, comprising an electrical load, a housing part, an external terminal for supplying electricity to said load, a cavity provided in said housing part for receiving a housingless temperature-dependent switching mechanism, said switching mechanism protecting said load from overtemperature and overcurrent, respectively, a first and a second countercontact being provided in said cavity, said first countercontact being electrically connected to said load and said second countercontact being electrically connected to said external terminal, said cavity being configured to receive said housingless switching mechanism such that said switching mechanism when being below its response temperature is in direct electrical contact with said first and second countercontacts for electrically interconnecting said first and second countercontact with each other.

2. A device as in claim 1, wherein a cover is provided that sealingly closes off the cavity after the switching mechanism has been set in place.

3. A device as in claim 2, wherein the cover is attached to the device in articulated fashion.

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4. A device as in claim 2, wherein one of the two countercontacts is arranged on the cover.

5. A device as in claim 4, wherein the second countercontact is arranged on the cover.

6. A device as in claim 1, wherein said switching mechanism is placed into the cavity, said switching mechanism being configured as a lossproof unit comprising a bimetallic element and a movable contact element that coacts with one of the two countercontacts.

7. A device as in claim 6, wherein the switching mechanism comprises a spring element that is held in lossproof fashion on the contact element that coacts with the other of the two countercontacts.

8. A device as in claim 1, wherein the switching mechanism is attached to a guide element that is inserted together with the switching mechanism into the cavity.

9. A device as in claim 8, wherein the guide element acts as a cover and closes off the cavity in sealed fashion.

10. A device as in claim 8, wherein one of the two countercontacts is arranged on the guide element.

11. A device as in claim 9, wherein one of the two countercontacts is arranged on the guide element.

12. A device as in claim 6, wherein the bimetallic element is configured as a bimetallic tongue that at its first end is attached to the guide element and at its free end carries the movable contact element.

Sub A2 Cont.

13. A device as in claim 7, wherein the spring element is configured as a spring tongue that at its first end is attached to the guide element and at its second end is joined to a first end of the bimetallic element, which at its free end carries the movable contact element.

14. A device as in claim 7, wherein the spring element has a retaining extension piece that is attached to the guide element.

15. A protective sheath for a switching mechanism attached to a guide element, the protective sheath completely enclosing the switching mechanism so that a portion of the guide element is exposed.

ADD B1

ADD C1

ADD D2